FROM FIDEL CASTRO BY HERBERT MATHEWS. 6.6.1969.

Fidel Castro. At the time of the Bay of Pigs invasion they and the militia rounded up several hundreds of thousands of suspects. They later helped Valdés's police organization to foil plots against the regime and to capture would-be assassins of Castro, generally sent in by the Cuban-exile organizations, with (the Castro revolutionaries are certain) CIA tolerance if not active help.

My own theory throughout the years has been that the CIA did not want Fidel Castro to be assassinated because of the political repercussions that would follow in Cuba and Latin America. It would have made a martyr of Fidel and would have led to a bloodbath and chaos in Cuba. This is an opinion which, emphatically, is not shared by Fidel Castro and his associates.

In May 1966, when I was in Cuba, they were all still talking about the plot by which Major Rolando Cubelas, a Sierra Maestra man who had proved incompetent and emotionally unstable and hence was given less and less important posts, was to kill Fidel. This plot, the Cubans knew, followed a conference in Madrid with Manuel Artime, the young exile chosen by the CIA to lead the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Due to clever work by Ramiro Valdés, the plot was foiled and Cubelas arrested and imprisoned. Because he had been "one of the boys," Fidel and the others felt rather sorry for Cubelas, who received a relatively light sentence. While I was in Havana, Fidel sent him some books to read in prison.

With such plots happening—including intermittent landings by saboteurs and would-be assassins from a "mother ship" presumably furnished by the CIA—I found myself unable to convince the Cuban leaders that Washington (or, more particularly, the CIA) did not want to have Fidel Castro killed, even if it could be done without seeming to involve the United States.

In such matters, laymen like myself can only guess. When it came to the Bay of Pigs there was no need to guess. It was a CIA affair, bungled so completely and ridiculously that the organization temporarily became a worldwide laughingstock.

The CIA's clumsiness with regard to Cuba did not begin in April 1961. In a book published in 1963 by Christopher Felix, a former American secret service officer, called *A Short Course in the Secret War*, there is a revealing quotation (page 107). It

NOTE HOW THE CHURCH COMMITTEE TOOK AN OLD STORY AND WITH NO NEW FACTS DID GIVE IT A NEW TWIST.